



# Washington State Department of Agriculture

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## **Agriculture Department releases annual pesticide investigations report**

OLYMPIA – The [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) (WSDA) investigated 157 complaints alleging violations of the state's pesticide laws between July 2012 and June 2013, the fiscal year covered by the agency's annual report to the state Legislature, released this month.

WSDA's [Pesticide Management Division](#) is responsible for enforcing the [state's pesticide laws](#), including rules for inspecting homes and other structures for pests like termites. The agency also:

- Registers more than 13,000 pesticide products for use in our state.
- Licenses about 24,000 pesticide applicators, dealers, and inspectors.
- Provides pesticide training in both English and Spanish.
- Helps farmers safely dispose of waste pesticides.

The agency is required to report annually on the activities of the Pesticide Division, including the outcome of its investigations. The "[2013 Annual Report to the Legislature](#)" is available on the agency website.

### **Highlights from the report include:**

- Most complaints (64) were for commercial and industrial pesticide use.
- Of all complaints, 42, or approximately 25 percent, involved agricultural applications.
- Of the complaints, 72 involved pesticide drift, with about half involving possible human exposure.
- 8,655 pesticide license exams were conducted.

More than half of the complaints, 98, resulted in some type of enforcement action, with 26 resulting in a civil penalty for the violator. Penalties that included fines ranged from a few hundred dollars to \$3,500 for a case involving human exposure.

WSDA uses a matrix to determine penalties when a violation is found to have been committed. Factors considered include the seriousness of the violation, whether it is a first-time or repeat offense, and any aggravating factors. Visit [www.agr.wa.gov/pestfert/enforcementactions.aspx](http://www.agr.wa.gov/pestfert/enforcementactions.aspx) to view the outcomes of WSDA pesticide investigations or [www.agr.wa.gov](http://www.agr.wa.gov) and enter "pesticide enforcement" in the search window.

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